

Support for ★ **Military Spouses** ★ Dealing with PTSD or TBI



When your spouse suffers from **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** or **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**, your relationship is faced with even more challenges.

One of the best ways to maintain a loving, healthy marriage is by educating yourself about your husband or wife's specific symptoms and treatment options.

Education can help you avoid personalizing negative behaviors that may be more related to PTSD or TBI than a reaction to you.

You can learn new strategies for ways to identify early signs of your partner's stress or anger as well as how to meet your own needs for emotional and physical health.

Other tips for coping with PTSD or TBI include:

Be patient. Recovery is a journey. Give it time, as setbacks are likely.

Attend counseling. A professional can help you and your spouse develop strategies and coping skills to improve emotional and physical intimacy.

Accept complicated feelings. It may be hard to realize you have negative feelings at times, but it's part of being human. Your love remains.

Join a support group. Encourage your spouse to spend time with others who have had similar experiences. He or she will feel less alone.

Spend time together daily. Create a routine for just you two with minimal stress.

Practice time-outs when frustration builds. Learn the triggers and give your spouse space when angry. If you fear for your safety, leave or call the police.

Listen. Tell your spouse you are interested in hearing what he or she wants to share. But don't force it.

Forgive often. The anger, moodiness, snubs or emotional distance are not always controllable. No one signed up for PTSD or TBI. Practice forgiveness.

Avoid comparisons. Your family's journey may differ from someone else's, even if the spouses share the same condition and symptoms.

Living with your spouse's injury is not easy, but working to get the right support, coping skills and treatment may allow both of you to strengthen your marriage.



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1-800-552-7096 Virginia Child Abuse Hotline (language line available)

800-Children (800-244-5373) Parent Helpline